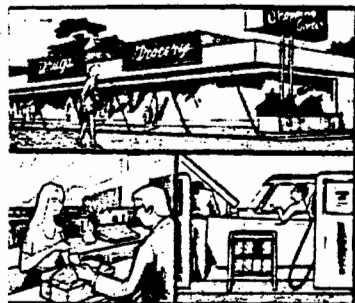


# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

## November 1984



FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, Thursday, December 13, 1984

CB-84-226

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for November, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were a record \$110.3 billion, up 1.8 percent from the revised level of \$108.4 billion in October and 8.3 percent above a year ago. This is the largest monthly increase since April of this year. Excluding the automotive group, total sales were up 2.0 percent in November and 7.3 percent above the previous year. The September through November sales were 1.1 percent above the previous three months and up 8.1 percent from the comparable year ago period.

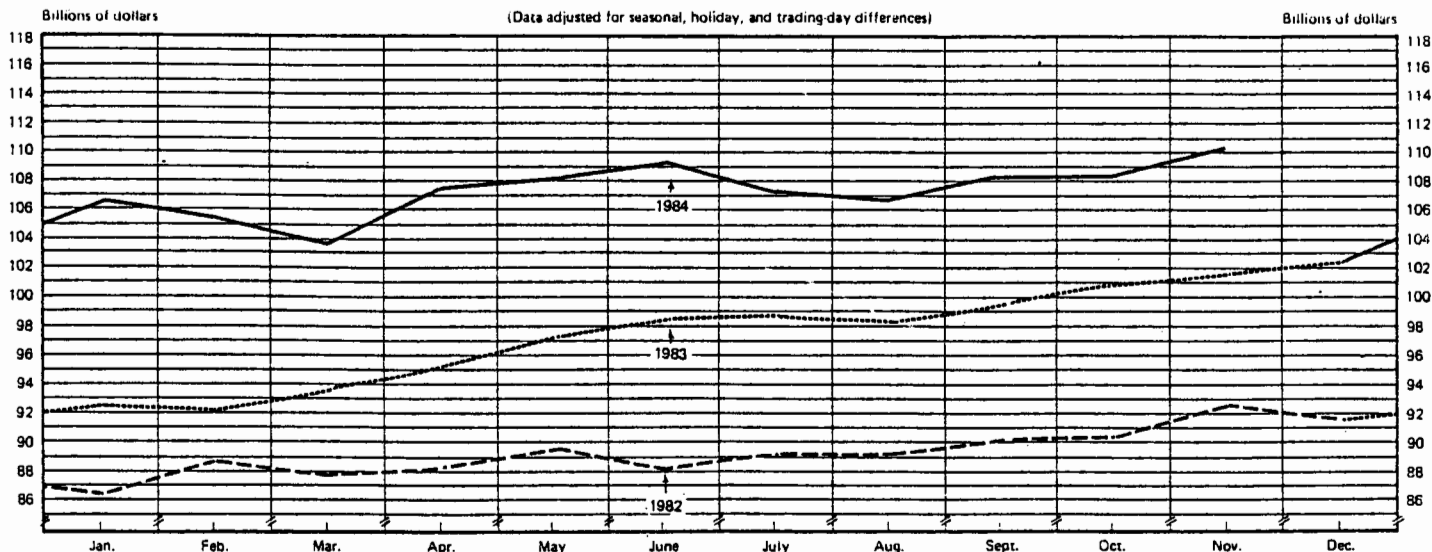
Durable goods increased 1.7 percent during November and were 12.9 percent above last year. The automotive group was up 1.0 percent from a revised increase of 5.9 percent in October. The November automotive sales of \$22.8 billion were slightly below the record level of \$23.0 billion set in June 1984. Building materials increased for the first time in 5 months, up 3.8 percent in November.

The nondurable goods group rose 1.8 percent in November and 5.9 percent above the previous year. Apparel stores led all major groups with a monthly increase of 3.9 percent, only the second increase in the last five months. General merchandise was up 2.6 percent, following a 2.3 percent decline in October, and was 8.7 percent above year ago sales. After a 1.4 percent decline in October, food store sales gained 2.4 percent in November while eating and drinking establishments rebounded 2.7 percent following last month's 2.4 percent decline. Gasoline service stations rose 2.0 percent in November and were 1.2 percent above the previous year for the first yearly increase since June of this year.

For a description of the sample design and reliability of the data, see back page.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for December is scheduled to be released January 15, 1985, at 8:30 a.m.

### ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1982-November 1984



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Ronald Piencykoski, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-5294/7561.



U.S. Department of Commerce  
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The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report, the Monthly Retail Trade report, and the Annual Retail Trade report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$37 per year. Add \$9.25 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 75 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1984			1983		1984			1983	
		Nov. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov.	Oct.
	Retail trade, total.....	113,217	108,870	103,932	103,865	100,658	110,349	108,395	108,240	101,896	100,923
	Total (excl. auto group)..	92,074	86,190	83,798	84,829	81,439	87,589	85,861	86,963	81,610	81,303
	Durable goods, total.....	38,238	38,883	35,695	34,002	33,593	39,094	38,427	37,046	34,641	33,882
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	5,695	6,163	6,051	5,103	5,557	5,811	5,597	5,720	5,188	5,102
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	4,641	4,574	3,740	4,130	(*)	4,089	4,204	3,751	3,681
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	863	837	832	813	(*)	846	874	826	805
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	21,143	22,680	20,134	19,036	19,219	22,760	22,534	21,277	20,286	19,620
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	19,199	20,666	18,233	17,064	17,300	20,891	20,645	19,376	18,388	17,780
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	18,763	16,430	15,569	15,648	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,014	1,901	1,972	1,919	(*)	1,889	1,901	1,898	1,840
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	5,466	5,104	4,953	4,899	4,428	5,089	5,062	5,123	4,510	4,476
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,006	2,883	2,926	2,726	(*)	2,936	2,954	2,684	2,715
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	1,771	1,726	1,640	1,398	(*)	1,787	1,830	1,500	1,444
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	705	712	690	609	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	74,979	69,987	68,237	69,863	67,065	71,255	69,968	71,194	67,255	67,041
53	General merchandise group stores..	16,372	12,935	12,202	14,755	12,063	13,384	13,044	13,354	12,317	12,112
531	Department stores.....	13,379	10,695	10,094	12,001	9,873	10,984	10,770	10,972	10,026	9,893
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	763	726	854	752	(*)	793	834	804	778
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,477	1,382	1,900	1,438	(*)	1,481	1,548	1,487	1,441
54	Food stores.....	23,507	22,828	22,773	21,501	21,780	23,685	23,123	23,449	21,978	21,992
541	Grocery stores.....	22,171	21,484	21,468	20,229	20,524	22,282	21,723	22,064	20,642	20,669
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,707	8,786	8,635	8,569	8,836	8,777	8,605	8,635	8,673	8,731
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,588	4,859	4,789	5,169	4,617	5,016	4,830	4,989	4,676	4,570
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	694	642	810	695	(*)	692	694	696	679
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,029	1,971	2,081	1,888	(*)	1,978	2,038	1,895	1,831
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,066	1,049	1,154	974	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	807	843	836	808	(*)	787	827	793	788
58	Eating and drinking places.....	10,107	10,409	10,633	9,494	10,113	10,572	10,296	10,549	9,983	9,924
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,563	3,486	3,334	3,251	3,168	3,595	3,583	3,624	3,311	3,297
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,618	1,602	1,689	1,603	(*)	1,685	1,674	1,682	1,661
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	519	369	532	461	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	26,392	25,304	28,487	24,181	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
594											

\*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-84-10).

<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

<sup>3</sup>GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

Note: Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

**Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business**

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Nov. 1984 advance from--		Oct. 1984 preliminary from--		Sept. 1984 through Nov. 1984	
		Oct. 1984 prelim.	Nov. 1983 final	Sept. 1984 final	Oct. 1983 final	June 1984 through Aug. 1984	Sept. 1983 through Nov. 1983
	Retail trade, total.....	+1.8	+8.3	-0.1	+7.4	+1.1	+8.1
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+2.0	+7.3	-1.3	+5.6	+1.2	+6.9
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.7	+12.9	+3.7	+13.4	+1.5	+13.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+3.8	+12.0	-2.2	+9.7	-1.7	+11.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.0	+12.2	+5.9	+14.9	+0.6	+13.3
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.2	+13.6	+6.5	+16.1	+0.9	+14.5
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.5	+12.8	-1.2	+13.1	+4.2	+14.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+1.8	+5.9	-1.7	+4.4	+0.9	+5.7
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2.6	+8.7	-2.3	+7.7	+2.0	+9.2
531	Department stores.....	+2.0	+9.6	-1.8	+8.9	+2.0	+10.2
54	Food stores.....	+2.4	+7.8	-1.4	+5.1	+1.9	+6.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+2.6	+7.9	-1.5	+5.1	+1.8	+6.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2.0	+1.2	-0.3	-1.4	+0.7	-0.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+3.9	+7.3	-3.2	+5.7	+0.4	+8.3
57	Eating and drinking places.....	+2.7	+5.9	-2.4	+3.7	-0.3	+5.6
581	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.3	+8.6	-1.1	+8.7	+2.3	+9.0

**Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business**

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Oct. 1984 prelim.	Sept. 1984 final	Oct. 1983	Oct. 1984 prelim.	Sept. 1984 final	Oct. 1983
	Retail trade, total.....	37,370	36,105	35,122	37,587	38,118	35,319
53	General merchandise group stores.....	11,695	11,037	10,857	11,809	12,087	10,930
531	Department stores.....	10,240	9,664	9,439	10,302	10,516	9,467
533	Variety stores.....	582	564	583	610	654	609
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	873	809	835	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	12,289	12,240	11,746	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	12,136	12,093	11,595	12,396	12,493	11,772
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,070	2,068	1,890	2,059	2,164	1,980
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	911	898	823	894	953	805
566	Shoe stores.....	425	426	410	425	422	412
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,965	1,912	1,747	2,084	2,099	1,866

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-84-10).

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

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### Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -1.1 percent to +1.1 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.5 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for October 1984 and final estimates for September 1984 based on the full sample will be published late this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for October (BR-84-10). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.7	-1.1	+1.1	-0.1	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.6	1.0	0.7	-0.8	+1.3	0.0	0.6
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.0	2.2	1.4	-1.4	+3.2	+0.4	1.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.9	3.1	2.7	-1.5	+5.1	+1.3	2.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.4	2.2	1.8	-1.0	+4.2	+0.6	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.9	1.3	-1.3	+4.8	+0.7	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.2	4.1	2.4	-3.5	+2.5	-0.5	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.8	0.6	-0.6	+1.2	0.0	0.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.9	0.5	-1.3	+1.0	+0.1	0.5
531	Department stores.....	0.1	0.6	0.3	-1.1	+1.0	+0.2	0.5
54	Food stores.....	0.7	1.1	0.9	-0.9	+1.3	-0.2	0.5
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.7	0.5	-0.8	+1.1	-0.2	0.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.1	1.0	-3.8	+3.0	-0.1	1.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.6	3.7	2.0	-3.0	+2.1	0.0	1.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.4	1.1	-2.4	+3.0	-0.1	1.2
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.6	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	-0.4	0.7

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of January-December 1983.

<sup>2</sup>The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, November 1983-October 1984. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period March 1983-February 1984.

Note: See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

